

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BAGHDA 00537 200649Z

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 AID-05 SAM-01 SAB-01 SAJ-01 /091 W

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R 200545Z APR 76

FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3078

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 0537

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IZ

SUBJ: IRAQI VIEWS ON RUSSIAN-EGYPTIAN CLASH

1. IN COMMENTING ON EGYPTIAN-SOVIET DIFFERENCES, GOVT.-CONTROLLED IRAQI PRESS HAS BEEN MODERATELY CRITICAL OF BOTH PARTIES. ATH-THAWRA ON APRIL 9 CRITICIZED EGYPT FOR EQUATING THE ENEMY (I.E. AMERICAN IMPERIALISM) WITH THE FRIEND (THE SOVIET UNION) AND FOR FORGETTING OR DENYING THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAS GIVEN THE ARABS ENORMOUS ECONOMIC AND MILITARY AID. ARTICLE ALSO ALLEGES THAT BLAME LIES PARTLY WITH THE USSR WHICH HAS HAD INACCURATE IDEAS ABOUT THE ARAB REGIMES AND HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM.

2. ARTICLE REFERS TO MANIFOLD DIFFICULTIES -- SOME OF THEM VITAL AND DELICATE -- WHICH HAVE EMERGED BETWEEN IRAQ AND THE USSR. AND COMPLAINS ABOUT SOME NEGATIVE THINGS WHICH ARE SAID BY SOME SOVIET QUARTERS ABOUT QUOTE OUR PARTY AS A RESULT OF IGNORANCE AND
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PAGE 02 BAGHDA 00537 200649Z

DIMWITTEDNESS UNQUOTE. ARTICLE DRAWS CONCLUSION THAT QUOTE PARTY

WHICH UPHOLDS A CONSISTENT AND PRINCIPLED STAND TOWARD RELATIONS OF ALLIANCE WITH THE SOVIET UNION IS THE ONE WHICH RECEIVES LESS POSITIVE

AND FAIR EVALUATION FROM THESE SOVIET QUARTERS UNQUOTE.

3. ARTICLE ENDS WITH CONCLUSION THAT ARAB INTERESTS REQUIRE MAINTENANCE OF RELATIONS OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION WITH SOVIET UNION IN ALL FIELDS AND EXPRESSES HOPE THAT ARAB-SOVIET RELATIONS WILL SURMOUNT THE PRESENT CRISIS.

4. COMMENT: IRAQI REGIME OBVIOUSLY TROUBLED BY APPARENT CONFLICTS BETWEEN ITS REVOLUTIONARY AND ANTI-IMPERIALIST (I.E. ANTI-U.S.) IDEOLOGY AND ITS PERCEIVED DIFFERENCES WITH SOVIET UNION. WE HAVE HEARD FROM NORMALLY RELIABLE AND FRIENDLY ARAB AMBASSADOR IN BAGHDAD THAT IRAQIS RECENTLY HAD SHARP CLASH WITH SOVIETS OVER ALLEGED

LACK OF SOVIET SUPPORT FOR IRAQ IN ITS DISPUTES WITH SYRIAN REGIME OVER DIVISION OF EUPHRATES RIVER WATER. NOW THAT IRAQIS ARE ECONOMICALLY INDEPENDENT OF SOVIET UNION AND CAN USE THEIR OIL EARNINGS TO PURCHASE THE TECHNOLOGY THEY NEED FROM EITHER EAST OR WEST, WE EXPECT CRITICISM OF SOVIET UNION TO SURFACE MORE AND MORE FREQUENTLY IN IRAQI PRESS. ON OTHER HAND, CONTINUED RELIANCE ON USSR FOR MILITARY SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT AND FEAR OF OFFENDING BAATHI IDEOLOGUES WITHIN RANKS OF PARTY MAY MODERATE SOMEWHAT IRAQI PUBLIC CRITICISM OF THE SOVIETS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, ANTIAMERICAN, ANTISOVIET
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BAGHDA00537
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760148-0801
From: BAGHDAD
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760446/aaaabmgd.tel
Line Count: 87
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 MAY 2004 by CollinP0>; APPROVED <02 SEP 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: IRAQI VIEWS ON RUSSIAN-EGYPTIAN CLASH
TAGS: PFOR, IZ, UR, EG
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006